



## 2d BW takes STRATCOM trophy



**Col. Michael Moeller, 2d Bomb Wing commander, shows off the Omaha Trophy. (Photo by Denise Raydar)**

*By Capt. Carla Pampe*  
8th Air Force Public Affairs

**BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.** – Members of Barksdale's 2d Bomb Wing recently brought home one of the top honors in U.S. Strategic Command – the Omaha Trophy – for Outstanding Strategic Aircraft Unit 2003.

The award was presented in a ceremony Jan. 6 at Hoban Hall. Marine Gen. James Cartwright, U.S. Strategic Command commander, presided over the ceremony.

"It is the excellence and standards you have operationally that earned this award for you all," General Cartwright said. "You have really set the mark op-

erationally throughout the world ... and you are to be commended for that."

General Cartwright noted what a busy year the 2d BW had, and what a difference it is making in the war on terror.

"You have found the formula to be successful," he said. "My hat's off to you for what you've done over the past year."

The general also noted how important it is for Barksdale to maintain a good relationship with the communities which surround it.

"These types of situations where we take the opportunity to make a relationship with the community are so critical

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## 116th receives Outstanding Unit Award

*By Senior Airman Tim Beckham*  
116th Air Control Wing Public Affairs

**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga.** – The 116th Air Control Wing was presented the Outstanding Unit Award Jan. 3, for exceptionally meritorious service from Oct. 1, 2002 to Aug. 1, 2004.

The 116th Bomb Wing won 11 Outstanding Unit Awards, but this is the first Outstanding Unit Award it has received since the wing blended Air National Guard and active duty members in October 2002.

"This recognition is not only for the outstanding performance of the wing in contingency operations – but also for successfully implementing the transformational Total Force concept in an operational wing," said Brig. Gen. Tom Lynn, 116th ACW commander.

"The performance of the men and women of the 116th ACW, under the stellar leadership of General Lynn, truly deserve this distinguished and coveted recognition," said Maj. Gen. David Poythress, Georgia ANG adjutant general.

Not only did the 116th ACW blend two years

ahead of schedule but it took on multiple deployments in support of four different operations, including the largest in Air Control Wing history, flying in seven different orbits.

"The men and women of the 116th have excelled at 'thinking outside the box' to make this transitional concept a reality and a template for future wings," said General Poythress. "And, to top off their blending challenge with an absolutely outstanding performance during Operations Noble Eagle, Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Endur-

ing Freedom, is the ultimate proof of what the 116th ACW is made of."

The Outstanding Unit Award is presented for exceptionally outstanding achievement that clearly sets the unit above and apart from similar units. The 116th ACW will be presented the award in the near future and then every member in the wing can officially wear the ribbon.

"This AFOUA is a direct reflection on the hard work and dedication of the men and women of the 116th. It is their award and I am extremely proud of them," said General Lynn.

# OIF cause understood by many Iraqis

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Maurice  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

**BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq (AFPN)** — I vividly remember the day when President Bush first declared that American troops were going into Iraq. I remember the incessant news coverage of some Iraqis' negative comments about the war and about Americans. But my recent arrival in Iraq has shown me the side of Iraqis that the media ignored then.

On that first day, the war was the lead headline in every paper, the lead story on every news channel. MTV even aired specials on what was going on.

I remember footage of those first blasts and our troops going in. I remember the president coming before the American people several more times. But most of all I remember the news media's footage of Iraqi citizens. In interview after interview you heard Iraqi men and young boys degrading Americans. The news stations showed footage of Iraqi men protesting our help and attacking our people.

Now, I'm not saying that this type of belief isn't felt by some Iraqi citizens. I am fully aware it is the belief of some that Americans are bad people and have no business in Iraq. If this were not the case then the Airmen, Soldiers, Marines and Sailors who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Iraq instead would be at

home with their families right now.

But I can't help but believe that they fought for a good cause and that their efforts are appreciated by many Iraqi citizens. As Americans we understand the importance of freedom.

And that is our "good cause" — to share freedom with people who could not achieve that goal on their own.

In the few days that I have spent here in Iraq I already have experienced the respect and kindness of Iraqi

men. Two incidents in particular come to mind when I think of this kindness.

This first incident happened when another Airman and I were driving through a muddy field and got our vehicle stuck. As at least eight different people walked or drove by and ignored our predicament, two young Iraqi men stopped what they were doing and came over to help the best they could. Both were wearing dress shoes. They went to the extent of taking them off, rolling up their pant legs and pushing the car with my troop as I put the pedal to the metal. The four of us spent at least 30 minutes in the cold and mud trying to get it out, until we finally gave up and walked to our office to get the car towed. These two gentlemen may

not have been able to fix our problem but they did everything they could to help when we were in need.

The second act of kindness was a little simpler, but meant just as much to me. It happened when I was making a

purchase at a small BX trailer on base. As the young Iraqi gentleman behind the counter rang up my purchase I couldn't help but appreciate how kind and courteous he was. He carried a friendly smile the entire time and after handing me

my bag extended his hand and said thank you. He actually shook my hand. I realize to some this may not sound like much, but in my 23 years of existence I have never had anyone working at a store shake my hand and say thank you.

It is incidents like these that make me proud to be a member of the United States Air Force and proud to be part of such an important mission as Operation Iraqi Freedom. I ask those who question our mission because of the negative things they may have seen and heard to remember these little incidents. There are those men and women in this far-off country who want to be free, deserve to be free, and with our help can be free!

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and women in this  
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## The "Mighty Eighth" Voice

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## 8 AF participates in joint exercise

By Capt. Carla Pampe  
8th Air Force Public Affairs

**BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.** – After nearly two weeks of intense training involving thousands of people nationwide, Exercise Blue Flag 05-01 and Joint Training Task Force Exercise 05-02 officially wrapped up Jan. 31.

“The exercise went extremely well – better than we thought it might, given the vast number of Air Operations Center warfighters who needed training,” said Col. Jeffry Smith, 608th Air Operations Group Commander. Colonel Smith served as the Combined Air and Space Operations Center Director for the Exercise. “Most of the 8th Air Force staff are very experienced in the AOC weapon system, so we ended up doing more instructing, which helped build another cadre of AOC-trained warriors.”

The purpose of Blue Flag was to certify 8th Air Force staff for deployment to a Combined Air and Space Operations Center. Similarly, JTFEX certified members of the U.S. Third Fleet’s Carl Vinson Carrier Group for deployment. This year marked the first time these two exercises have been combined. In addition to personnel from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy and



Navy Commander Joe Ihlan, Offensive and Defensive Counter Air Duty Officer for Joint Task Force Exercise 05-2, and Navy Commander Jim McDonough, Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses Duty Officer for JTFEX, monitor the progress of exercise operations from their duty stations in the Command Air Forces Combined Air and Space Operations Center. Both officers serve with the Navy’s Carrier Strike Group Three, and were part of the multi-service and multi-national team that participated in the exercise. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeff Loftin)

*“The exercise went extremely well  
– better than we thought it might,  
...”*

*Col. Jeffry Smith*  
608th Air Operations Group commander

Marines, members of the British Royal Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force also participated in the exercise.

“This gave us an opportunity to work the very complex issues involved with putting all three of the ‘Force’ components to-

gether and test our ability to integrate our fires,” said Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, commander of 8th Air Force. General Carlson served as the Combined Forces Air Component Commander for the exercise. “It provided a very steep learning curve.”

Colonel Smith said this type of training is vital to those operating an AOC.

“This training is as essential to the AOC weapon system as much as it is to our aircrews who carry out their missions over the battlefield,” he said. “An exercise like Blue Flag is critical to that training because we need robust and dynamic play of a multi-hundred sortie per day flight operation to fully test the system, including time sensitive targeting, search

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# New mobility concept tested at Whiteman

By 1st Lt. Ed Gulick  
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

**WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Mo.** — The third passenger aircraft in two weeks departed here Jan. 13 after a small group of Whiteman members worked through the holidays to plan for the deployment of more than 400 Airmen under a new mobility concept developed by U.S. Central Command Air Forces.

This was the first time deploying Airmen from several bases met here to catch contract airlift to an intermediate point where intra-theater airlift would take members to various final locations.

After arriving at Whiteman, the Airmen spent time at the deployment center watching big-screen TVs, talking on telephones and playing various board games while waiting for their flight.

Col. Chris Miller, 509th Bomb Wing commander, and other base leaders walked among the deploying Air Force members making small talk and wishing them a safe trip.

"The idea of using continental U.S. bases as aggregation launch pads was both to avoid choke points at civilian airports and to better track deploying Airmen in order to improve intra-theater transportation," Colonel Miller said.

Capt. Robert Austin, 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron Deployment Readiness Flight commander, received an e-mail from CENTAF in November designating Whiteman as a rally point for Airmen deploying to Southwest Asia in early January. His flight began working every detail to get the deploying Airmen here and then send them on their way to forward locations.

To get here, they came by commercial airline, chartered bus and



**Members of the 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron load mobility bags onto a vehicle to be transported to a passenger aircraft during the aggregation phase here Jan. 4. The aggregation is an experimental mobility concept set up by U.S. Central Command Air Forces to establish a centralized point to lower costs and provide better support for deploying Airmen during Air Expeditionary Forces 3 and 4. (Photo Staff Sgt. Tia Schroeder)**

plane, and by private vehicles. Most came in groups, but some came individually, Captain Austin said. "Each group's itinerary had to be coordinated and timed so base support could be ready when they arrived," he said.

Some, like Master Sgt. Bill McKeon from Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., left with a group on a government-chartered plane that took off from Ellsworth at 4 a.m. local time Jan. 4 and landed here at 7 a.m. local time. Upon arrival, his group was taken to an off-base hotel where they were given a room until 5 p.m. Sergeant McKeon said he took a nap and then went to a restaurant near his hotel for a late lunch before meeting the bus back to Whiteman.

Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Franke from F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo., drove to Denver Jan. 3 with his family to take a commercial flight to Kansas City In-

ternational Airport. Once there, he boarded a government bus to Whiteman.

When Chaplain Franke arrived here, the bus took him straight to the deployment center where he unloaded his bags. He signed for his room, and was handed a base lodging map and room key so that when the bus pulled up at lodging, he was able to go straight to his room.

The next day his group met at the deployment center to turn in weapons at 11 a.m. They didn't have to report to the deployment center for the final time until 7 p.m. So Chaplain Franke said he spent some time with his parents, who drove to Whiteman to see him off.

When Chaplain Franke asked the bus driver taking his group to lodging if

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the base does aggregation deployments often, the answer wasn't what he expected.

"We were very pleasantly surprised to find that we were the first ones going through the process," he said. "Everything was going so smooth. We thought Whiteman had been doing this for years."

That is exactly what Captain Austin wanted to hear. "We worked hard to make the transition through here as painless as possible," he said.

Everything was going according to plan until the Jan. 4 ice storm and unscheduled deploying members arrived here. "They created obstacles that had to be overcome," Captain Austin said.

The storm caused KCI to cancel a number of flights and delay others. "This caused us to make several unscheduled bus runs and hold several buses in-place at the airport for many hours," he said.

The weather almost canceled the flight out of Whiteman, but with the freezing line holding 15 miles west of base, the commercial aircraft was able to land and leave on time.

Fifteen deploying Airmen reported to Whiteman who weren't scheduled to meet here for their deployments. This increased the workload, but Captain Austin's team was able to get them processed and deployed with the rest of the groups.

Overall, the coordination

between the bases involved and Whiteman went well, Captain Austin said.

"Everyone understood the importance of succeeding and pitched in, sometimes with long hours, to get folks out on time," he said.

One example of pitching in involved the traffic management office. Staff members each worked many 14-hour days typing passenger information into the cargo manifesting operating system. This had to be done before each passenger was allowed to board the commercial airliners and leave Whiteman.

First Lt. Russell Rumley, 509th LRS vehicle operations officer, worked with Captain Austin's team to coordinate times and transportation support for everything from picking up passengers at KCI to getting a bus route set up to take deploying members around base.

Tech. Sgt. James Presley, 509th Services Squadron, coordinated lodging, and some base dining and entertainment. For Sergeant Presley, the time of year was critical.

"If this had happened in June or during the (Missouri) State Fair, off-base lodging would have been nearly impossible to get," he said.

Every base was responsible for sending each member's itinerary so Sergeant Presley could get lodging. "Communications from other bases and here ran



**Airman 1st Class Willie Williams, 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron, weighs Senior Master Sgt. Luke Brito, 55th Mission Support Squadron from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., at the manifest desk during the aggregation phase Jan. 4. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Lauren Padden)**

very smoothly," he said.

Sergeant Presley said approximately 70 percent of the deploying Airmen were lodged on base.

When asked how he would determine if the process went well, Captain Austin said it would depend on many factors. Ensuring the deploying members left

Whiteman on time was one. Also, the process needed to save the Air Force money, and reduce stress on the deploying Airmen and civilian hubs.

All flights left Whiteman on time, but it will be months before the final results of this process are known and analyzed.

# Royal Air Force pilot trains in B-2, T-38

By Senior Airman Joe  
Lacdan  
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

**WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Mo.** — English pilot David Arthurton is going where no Royal Air Force pilot has gone before.

The RAF flight lieutenant (equivalent of a U.S. captain) is the first foreign aviator to train in the B-2 stealth bomber here.

"I'm looking forward to flying the B-2," said the 32-year old native of Norwich, England.

The Tornado fighter jet GR4 veteran will call Whiteman home for the next three years.

Flight Lieutenant Arthurton completed T-38

training and began B-2 training this week. Flight Lieutenant Arthurton is assigned to the 394th Combat Training Squadron, although he will eventually move to the 325th Bomb Squadron.

His first B-2 flight is tentatively scheduled for May. Flight Lieutenant Arthurton arrived here in October 2004.

"It's obviously a great honor being the first non-U.S. citizen to be given the opportunity to join the B-2 community," he said. "I look forward to the challenge ahead."

RAF senior leaders selected Flight Lieutenant Arthurton as part of the U.S. Air Force and RAF exchange program.

Flight Lieutenant Arthurton's tenure at Whiteman marks an exciting time for the B-2 program, said Lt. Col. Tom Bussiere, 325th BS commander.

"(His arrival) will build upon an already strong relationship we have with the United Kingdom," Colonel Bussiere said. "This cultural and professional exchange will pay big dividends in years to come."

Before starting his tour here, Flight Lieutenant Arthurton was the Weapons Instructor on the XIII Squadron at RAF Marham, England.

Flight Lieutenant Arthurton flew 25 combat missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He has ex-

perienced training with the American military training in the T-37 and T-38 at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

"It's a very different job," Flight Lieutenant Arthurton said. "In my old airplane (Tornado) we spent a lot of time at low level (using) laser-guided bombs, whereas the B-2 uses primarily GPS-guided munitions."

The newlywed Arthurton said the Whiteman family has helped him and his new bride, Poppy, settle in.

"I think it's partly the advantage of a relatively small community," Flight Lieutenant Arthurton said. "Everyone's been really helpful."

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to the military," the general said. "It lets them understand what you do day to day in the military."

After his remarks, General Carwright introduced Mr. Jack Baker, a member of the USSTRATCOM Consultation Committee, for the presentation.

"The Strategic Command Consultation Committee looks forward to the opportunities such as this to recognize you ... the best of the best," he said. "Even though our time here is short, we're already impressed by the commitment and spirit we've seen from you, our fighting men and women."

Mr. Baker praised the men and women of the 2d BW for their hard work and dedication to the mission.

"Over the past year your missions have expanded and you're more prepared than ever to fight the global war on terrorism," Mr. Baker said. "I hope

[this trophy] will remind you that the people in the heartland support you, we admire you and we value your service and your commitment to excellence."

Col. Michael Moeller, 2d BW commander, accepted the trophy on the wing's behalf.

"[This award] is a tribute to the tremendous commitment of the entire wing to our USSTRACOM mission — the wing sets and then resets the bar for excellence," he said. "Despite our extremely heavy operational taskings, our warriors stayed focused on the wing's vector and always put mission first and accomplished their assigned tasks right first time — every time!"

Colonel Moeller also stressed that the Omaha Trophy represented a team effort.

"The Omaha Trophy is a Team Barksdale victory — the mighty Deuce

could not have won without the help of 8th Air Force, the 917th Wing and the outstanding community support!"

The Omaha Trophy was first presented in 1970 on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Strategic Air Command by the citizens of Omaha, Neb., as a way to honor outstanding units in SAC, and to show their appreciation for the men and women of the U.S. military.

In 1992, when SAC stood down and U.S. Strategic Command was activated, the USSTRATCOM Consultation Committee requested the new command to continue to award the Omaha Trophy to its outstanding operational units. New categories for best Intercontinental Ballistic Missile wing, U.S. Navy fleet ballistic missile submarine and strategic space and information operations unit were later added. The 2d BW won the trophy in 1988, 1991, 1994 and 1996.



# 116th EOD finds explosive device in barn

By Tech. Sgt. Beverly Isik  
116th ACW Public Affairs

**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga.** – A dusty old storage building tucked away behind an old farm house in the sleepy southern town of Byron, Ga., isn't exactly the kind of place you'd expect to find dangerous explosives.

But, in this business, explosive ordnance technicians say they never assume, unless they are assuming "worst case scenario." They never leave anything to chance. They respond to every call armed with state-of-the-art tools of the trade and countless hours of training under their belt – ready to eliminate the hazzard.

The team responded to a call from the Peach County Sheriff's Department Jan. 12. Before they entered the old shop, Master Sgt. John Bell and Staff Sgt. Joseph Fletcher climbed into their 75-pound explosion protection suits and forced on the helmets.

As they inched their way into the shop, the air was thick with fumes from degreasers, lubricants and old weathered wood. By the fading light of late afternoon, amongst the forgotten engine parts, rusty tools and oil stained floors, they found two high-explosive anti-tank projectiles just inside the door. One was propped against the wall on the right. The other lay on the ground

beneath it. Both were covered with a thick layer of dust and cob webs.

The EOD team's mission – maneuver the remote x-ray machine to take real-time pictures and check the ordnance for live components.

This time, they were fortunate. A remnant of the 1970s placed in the barn by a now deceased, former employee of the San Diego Munitions Depot, the 106-millimeter projectiles contained no live components.

"The man used to work in the depot and somehow he managed to get a hold of the HEAT rounds and kept them as souvenirs," Bell explained. "He moved a few times and then stuck them in the barn. His wife was out going through the old stuff and found them."

This type of call isn't unusual for EOD technicians from the 116th Civil Engineer Squadron who responded to about 26 calls last year – some of which were from civil authorities concerning citizens who just happened upon some vintage munitions lying around their property.

This is not a job for everyone. The extra \$150 each month would be of little consolation to the majority of airmen.

However, contrary to what some people might believe, the Air Force's nearly 1,000 EOD troops are more than just thrill-seekers who



**Staff Sgt. Joseph Fletcher, explosive ordnance disposal technician, poses with the explosive device EOD found Jan. 12 in a barn in Byron, Ga. (Photo by Senior Airman Tim Beckham)**

like blowing stuff up. The Air Force only accepts volunteers and conducts extensive background checks, as well as physical and psychological exams on everyone who applies. Many applicants are rejected because they're not suited for the job.

Sometimes, suspicious packages and munitions like

the one found in Byron turn out to be false alarms. Other times, things are more volatile.

For example, last year, as they were wrapping up a response to a suspicious package on base, the EOD team got a call to support

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# 8 AF command chief gets Bronze Star

By Tech. Sgt. Jeff Loftin  
8th Air Force Public Affairs

**Barksdale Air Force Base, La.** – The 8th Air Force command chief believes he's surrounded by heroes. Ironically 8th Air Force members gathered last month to recognize him as a hero and awarded him a Bronze Star for his service in Iraq.

This year Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ledoux was home for the holidays, but last year he was the command chief for all the Air Force units in Iraq. His job kept him moving through dangerous territory between bases all over the country.

"To me it was a great assignment," he said. "I don't think I was ever happy flying in Iraq, though, because it seemed like every time we did we got shot at.

"I've never seen that coming up through the Air Force," he said. "I've been in the Air Force for 30 years and this is the first time I've really been in a war. Everybody says I deployed over here or deployed over there, but ... you really feel it in Iraq because there is not one place you can go where you really feel safe. You're always on your toes, you're always looking."

The chief had plenty of war stories to warrant his insecure feeling. In one, he said the most horrific thing he heard about was an Iraqi who blew himself up next to a convoy. "That tells you the value of life for the enemy, and it didn't compute well with us."

In another instance, he was at a medical center when casualties came in from an explosion at the Italian compound.

"I think the biggest impact was watching this one young troop carrying in a baby that died in his hands," said Chief Ledoux. "That actually hit most people pretty hard. Our medics



**Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ledoux, 8th Air Force command chief master sergeant, serves the troops at the dining tent in Tahlill, Iraq, during his deployment there. The chief recently earned the Bronze Star for his actions in Iraq. (Courtesy photo)**

tried everything to resuscitate it, but they couldn't."

Although the chief and most of the troops took the stress of the situation well he said, some of the younger troops needed more encouragement. Chief Ledoux spent a lot of time talking to young troops frightened by explosions. He said many times these were just the Explosive Ordinance Disposal team blowing up munitions, but the young troops didn't know.

The chief was a principal advisor to area commanders on force protection and quality of life.

"One thing we can say on our watch is we didn't have anybody get killed," he said. "We had over 5,500 troops during my watch. It wasn't my doing, but we promoted that (force protection and safety) a lot.

"Every time we turned around we made an improvement to force protection," said Chief Ledoux. "I was real proud of that."

One force protection measure the chief highlighted was the construction of a new front gate at one location that made it safer for everyone. A pit was even built to search people coming into the base, complete with a metal detector for added protection.

"We made sure we had adequate protection around the tents – sandbags and everything," he said. "Kirkuk put in hardened shelters, 'Texas' barriers and sandbags between each dormitory and tent area. If you had to run, within 50 feet you could be in a hardened shelter."

Quality of life was extremely important there, the chief said, and he helped with projects to raise the troops' standard of living. One of those was getting a laundry service at Kirkuk.

"We couldn't rely on anyone to do our laundry," he said. "They just did such a poor job. It came back worse

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local authorities with a suspect package at a video rental store on Russell Parkway.

"It turned out to be an actual improvised incendiary device that was designed to burn down the building," Fletcher explained.

They remotely rendered it safe with a percussion actuated neutralizer, or water cannon.

"We try not to go hands on," Fletcher said. "We only do that as a last resort. We have certain tools we use and procedures we follow to

do everything as remotely as possible."

The EOD team responds with about \$500,000 in equipment designed to make their job as safe as possible, Bell explained. The inventory ranges from robots that poke around packages to metal cannons that shoot steel slugs or bursts of water that shred through devices, Fletcher explained. There's even a remote x-ray system used for evaluating internal components.

"We still have to go

down range sometimes to set up equipment depending on what we're trying to x-ray," he said. "If it's something we can't move with the robot or if it's going to be a tight fit to get the x-ray equipment behind it and get an image on film, then we have to go down range."

That's why he said they have the bomb suits, flack vests and helmets.

"The bomb suit provides minimal protection from explosives point blank," Fletcher explained.

"It's actually designed for protection on the way in and on the way out."

Dressed in the Kevlar-like bomb suits that resemble something from a science fiction movie, and armed with state-of-the-art technology and nearly 4,000 technical orders that describe every conceivable manufactured explosive device and defusing instructions, this group of professional destroyers are trained to handle everything from match heads to atomic bombs.

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"We couldn't rely on anyone to do our laundry," he said. "They just did such a poor job. It came back worse than it went. So, getting washers and dryers hooked up was a big deal."

The chief spent a lot of time working with the troops, from helping them pour cement slabs to flying with the Special Forces. "I've got to know what they do so when they tell me they need crew rest I can appreciate what they have to do to stay wide awake."

Chief Ledoux worked hard to get recognition for the troops, and after he had returned was surprised to hear he was being awarded the Bronze Star.

"I was so impressed with the people there – the airmen, the NCOs, the senior NCOs, and the office corps

– and how well they responded to emergencies," he said. "I couldn't have been with a better group of people. That was impressive! ...They worked a lot of hours. If you needed something, they were there. For all the nay-sayers – we are probably doing more good for that coun-

try than anyone will ever know. From building the schools and building the hospitals up, we saved a lot of people.

"I was proud of what I did and I was proud of the people I served with, and most importantly I'm proud to be with the United States armed forces," he said.



**Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ledoux, 8th Air Force command chief master sergeant, poses with some puppies he came across in Iraq. He said it just brings you back to your childhood and that in some ways life is the same everywhere. (Courtesy photo)**

# 116 ACW University offers first class on blending

By Tech. Sgt. Beverly Isik  
116th ACW Public affairs

**ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga.** – Blending 101. Processes and Analyses of Leave Basics. Concepts of Pay.

These are examples of the types of courses you might expect to find at the 116th Air Control Wing University.

Although still in its infancy, the university offered its first classroom course during the Dec. 16, 2004, Right Start, educating active-duty newcomers on the concept of blending.

Inspired by Gen. Tom Lynn, commander, this multi-tiered educational program is designed help everyone in the wing understand the differences and similarities.

“We’re a total force, but we have a multitude of different programs our people need to know about,” explained 116th ACW Chief of Staff Col. Lois Stark. “The biggest challenge we have faced as a blended wing is understanding each other’s difference’s.”

With nine different statuses of people in the wing, each category having different pay programs, promotion programs and leave programs, people can easily get confused about even the most basic concepts, she said.

For instance, with their supervisor’s permission, active-duty troops can leave work during the duty day, go get a hair cut and come back, she explained.

“If I go get a hair cut, I have to take leave because I’m a technician,” the colonel said. “If I have a doctor’s appointment, I have to take sick leave that I earn annually, separate from my annual leave. It’s just a myriad of nuances that sometimes cause friction.”

Another example is Air Combat Command Family Days, she said.

“It’s a wonderful concept. I love it,” she said. “But we cannot give the guard folks in this wing a day off. The federal law prohibits us from giving a technician or AGR person an extra day off. Is it equal? No. Can we get as fair as possible? Yes. And this education program will hopefully promote better understanding.”

It’s about the things people care most about – time and money, explained former Army Capt. Konata Crumbly, now an Air National Guard traditional member, who has taken on the task of building the university from the ground up.

“For example, you’re a civilian during the week, but on the weekend you tell me you’re an E-7,” the captain explained. “Those are the type of things people need to understand to make people work better. You don’t always have to agree with everything, but you definitely need to understand.”

There were about 30 people in that first class, according to Captain Crumbly who has been working on the university since September.

“People seemed to appreciate it,” he said. “And, they gave us some ideas on ways we could make improvements and other topics they would like to see covered.”

By March or April, the 116th ACW university should be totally virtual, available 24 hours a day, with everything you ever wanted to know about blending brought right to your home or office desktop.

The colonel sees a virtual university on the wing’s Web site where

people can find a variety of media on different blended topics.

“Whether it be a PowerPoint slide presentation or a video tape, it won’t be just classes,” she explained. “Then we can tailor the program to whatever our specific needs are. I can see where we could put all kinds of things in this university.”

It’s like a university, with colleges underneath, according to Colonel Stark.

In addition the active-duty Right Start College, there will be a Newcomers College for the Guard members; a Supervisor’s College and even a Commanders College.

The concept of the university came from the need for educating people on blending, but the colonel definitely sees it growing.

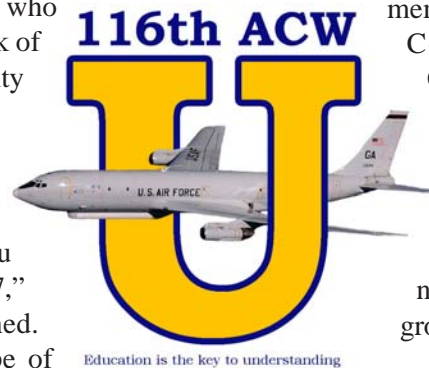
“We could put some suicide prevention information in there. Possibly sexual harassment prevention training and even family readiness,” she said.

Meanwhile, Captain Crumbly is taking existing media from organizations in the wing and building the university block by block.

One of things he’s incorporating now is the wing’s pre-deployment book because deployments are a big part of life in the 116th. He’s also putting together slide shows and is looking at DVDs, compact discs and various other forms of media.

The university will continue to grow and develop with the vision and guidance of General Lynn, according to Colonel Stark.

“He has devoted more than 25 years to this wing,” she said. “And I believe this will be his legacy.”





# B-2 pilot broadens career in China

By Melissa Klinkner  
509th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

## WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Mo. —

Almost four years ago, one of Whiteman's members applied for a scholarship presented only to a limited number of Air Force officers per year. The winner of this prestigious educational award would be given the opportunity to live and study in a nation of his choice for two years.

The Whiteman member — Maj. Rob Spalding, 393rd Bomb Squadron assistant director of operations — achieved this opportunity through the competitive Olmsted scholarship. He returned here in May 2004 after spending two years in Shanghai, China, studying economics and writing his doctoral dissertation.

The Olmsted program was started by Army Gen. George Olmsted, upon his return from World War II, under the conviction that leaders should be educated broadly.

"Not only did this opportunity provide me with new knowledge that applies directly to my job as an operations officer, it provided me an incredible educational and cultural experience with my family that would never have been feasible otherwise," Major Spalding said.

The B-2 pilot first learned of the scholarship through a former co-worker and, in 2000, made the decision to apply, never believing he had a chance of being selected.

"The application process consists of various tests including a language aptitude test, getting certain scores, having a certain grade point average as an undergraduate and having a good service record," he said. "All those criteria put together tend to be daunting and make people think the goal is unattainable, but I'm living proof that it is."

Lt. Col. Jeff Long, 393rd BS director of operations, said he felt Major Spalding was suited for such an endeavor because, "He's a brilliant man, capable of handling the new language. Generally, persons selected for these types of fellowships are people who've demonstrated the intelligence and demeanor for higher learning and diplomatic communications skills."

Maj. Todd Berge, 509th Operations Group, agreed.

"Major Spalding isn't someone to be intimidated by the challenges a new

language and culture were sure to produce," Major Berge said.

However, Major Spalding said

the decision to apply for the scholarship program was more difficult than choosing his country of residence. "I was thinking of my family when I made the decision to go to China. It was probably the safest country that I could think of because of the stable government and the lack of internal conflict in the country. I also knew China was going to play a big part in our strategy for the future," he said.

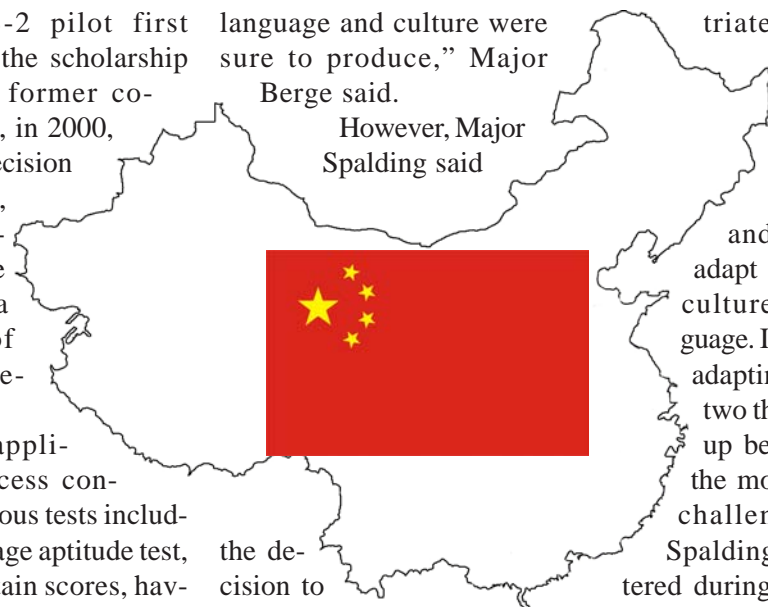
To prepare for his trip to China, Major Spalding attended the Defense Language Institute for an intensive study of the Chinese language where he became fluent in reading and listening. After one year of learning the Chinese vocabulary, Major Spalding and his family made the move to Shanghai.

To minimize discomfort for his family, they moved into a neighborhood of expa-

triates — non-Chinese people living and working in China — and began to adapt to the new culture and language. Incidentally, adapting to these two things ended up being two of the most difficult challenges the Spaldings encountered during the entire process.

"Adjusting to the food was easier said than done," he said with a smile. "The Chinese have huge supermarkets filled with items you don't recognize or know what to do with. Our strategy for getting the kids to eat was shipping over a lot of ranch dressing. You can put ranch dressing on anything and eat it."

Besides the food, other cultural adjustments included being constantly surrounded and watched by the Chinese people. "In smaller Chinese cities, the people are fascinated by foreigners. They were always smiling and friendly, and wanted to talk to us, trying any English words they might know," Major Spalding said. "We learned what it might feel like to be a movie or rock star and



● **China, from page 11**

never have any privacy. Even when we were eating by a window in a restaurant, the Chinese would begin to crowd outside the window to look at us.”

The almost 13-year Air Force veteran said he never really ‘got used’ to China. He learned how difficult it would be for a person to go to another country; leaving behind what they know and trying to assimilate there.

“I realized what a great country we have — the best country in the world — and how blessed we are,” he said. “The only thing I have is luck to have been born in America; I could’ve just as easily been born a Chinese person and had tremendous struggles.”

Major Spalding said the average Chinese person in Shanghai doesn’t own a refrigerator, TV or car, and usually lives in an apart-

*“I realized what a great country we have -- the best country in the world -- and how blessed we are.”*

*Maj. Ro Spalding  
393rd Bomb Squadron*

ment with only cement for walls, ceilings and floor. They might have a plastic table, plastic chair and pillows to sleep on, but still have essentially no material items.

“They have a lot of social issues there that we (Americans) have already worked through and solved,” he said.

Major Spalding learned about Chinese priorities, vulnerabilities and strengths while he lived there. He said the Olmsted vision was fulfilled through the experience and knowledge he gained. “My

knowledge of China will apply directly to the mission here,” he said.

Co-workers and superiors agree that the experience only strengthened Major Spalding’s already vast knowledge and said that, despite his intelligence, he’s willing to listen and be mentored. Words they used to describe him included driven, motivated and dedicated.

“He’s an optimal blend of common sense, intelligence and fun-loving,” said Lt. Col. Greg Smith, 509th Operations Support Squadron.

Major Spalding’s trip to China was a mind-broadening experience.

“It helps him bring a fresher and different perspective (to the mission). Not only can he think quickly and easily, he could think as an economist and a statistician with the Chinese on tougher subjects,” Colonel Smith said. “It was a fairly easy transition (to China) for him compared to most.”

Since returning from China, Major Spalding continues striving after his goals of doing his best, becoming a squadron commander and continuing to develop to his full potential. “I gained so much from living in China and, no matter where the Air Force takes me, I’ll never complain because of the phenomenal opportunity they provided me with.”

● **JOINT, from page 3**

and rescue, theater ballistic missile defense and classified and sensitive information warfare operations.”

By all accounts, the feedback 8th Air Force received was very positive, the colonel said.

“Even those areas where we agreed needed additional attention for future exercises were of a positive nature,” Colonel Smith said. “Many of the U.S. Navy personnel were highly experienced in AOC operations, as were the majority of the British and Australian players, but those who experienced their first-

ever play in an AOC weapon system were tremendously impressed, and left with a much better understanding of operational-level air warfare.”

For members of the coalition, including the Royal Australian Air Force, the training was about learning to integrate well with other forces.

“For us, it’s working with the coalition partners, and understanding how we do the job as opposed to how they do it, so we can step smoothly into that environment if we need to,” said Squadron Leader (Major)

Chris Robson.

Colonel Smith felt the training easily met all requirements by 8th Air Force and the other components involved.

“In my view as the AOC director, I’m confident we far exceeded our training requirements,” he said.

General Carlson added, “All [components and services] involved felt like it was well worth their while to participate, and are looking forward to the next opportunity to train in this forum again ... it was a home run!”



# CAP: Airman moonlights as Civil Air Patrol officer

By 1st Lt. Gregory Caggiano  
27th Intelligence Support Squadron

**LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VA.** — During the week Jillian Smith is addressed as Airman 1st Class Smith; on the weekends it's Lieutenant Smith. Why the title change? This 27th Intelligence Support Squadron communications troop splits her time between the Air Force and the Virginia Wing of the U.S. Air Force Auxiliary Civil Air Patrol.

A nonprofit corporation, CAP is Congressionally chartered to perform emergency services such as search and rescue, homeland security and cadet and aerospace education programs. All members are volunteers with the exception of headquarters staff, explained Mr. Jim Tynan, CAP headquarters public affairs.

"It originally started with homeland security in the 1940s," said Mr. Tynan. "Today CAP performs 95 percent of all inland search and rescue operations in the United States, such as searching for downed aircraft and missing persons."

The missions are tasked to CAP by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Langley Air Force Base, Mr. Tynan said.

Airman Smith joined CAP as a cadet when she was 15 years old and served in the Sea Post Composite Squadron in New Hampshire. When she turned 19, she enlisted in the Air Force and became a CAP senior leader. She now serves as a second lieutenant and is an administration and personnel officer for the Langley Composite Squadron.

Her commander, CAP Lt. Col. Monica Richardson who leads the



**Airman 1st Class Jillian Smith wears two uniforms. As an active duty Air Force member, left, she is a 27th Intelligence Support Squadron communications journeyman. In her off duty time she volunteers with the Civil Air Patrol and is a second lieutenant, right. (Photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Marina Pevey)**

squadron at Langley Air Force Base said she leans heavily on 2nd Lt. Smith to ensure the unit is running on all cylinders.

"Jillian has made some valuable contributions to the squadron," said Colonel Richardson. "She helped straighten out the cadets' records and now keeps them up to date."

However, Airman Smith said working with cadets is her favorite part of serving as a senior member.

The Langley Composite Squadron includes 35 cadets between the ages of 12 and 21, and 17 senior members. Airman Smith mentors the junior members and tutors the cadets to help them perform their best in the various aerospace education programs.

She continues to pursue her own

education as well. Currently, she is working on her Community College of the Air Force degree. Last summer she attended CAP Squadron Leadership School in Danville, Va., and in July she received the Chuck Yeager award for Senior Member Aerospace Education.

Airman Smith encourages anyone interested in volunteering to visit a CAP meeting and to talk to current members about their experiences.

"Anyone can join and we are always looking for new cadets and senior members; CAP is very rewarding," she said.

To learn more about CAP or to locate a unit, visit [www.cap.gov](http://www.cap.gov).

(Editor's note: 480th Intelligence Wing public affairs contributed to this story).